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Security Council

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Letter dated 25 May 2000 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), I have the honour to convey the attached report on the international security presence in Kosovo covering the period from 23 March to 22 April 2000.

I should be grateful if you would bring it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

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Annex

Monthly report to the United Nations on the operations of the Kosovo Force

1. Over the reporting period (23 March-22 April), there were just over 46,000 Kosovo Force (KFOR) troops deployed in theatre, with no major deployment changes since the last report, although one country deployed additional troops into Kosovo for employment in Multinational Brigade (MNB)(North) in the vicinity of Mitrovica. On 18 April Lieutenant General Juan Ortuño assumed command of KFOR from the outgoing commander General Klaus Reinhardt.

Security

2. During this period, the overall level of violence in the province remained of concern. The situation in Mitrovica was calmer than before, owing in part to the incremental establishment of the confidence zone, and to the opening of a footbridge from the south bank over the River Ibar to the so-called Three Towers area, a multi-ethnic residential area. Elsewhere ethnic pressure on Kosovo Serbs persisted, particularly in central Kosovo, although northern Kosovo and the Strpce enclave remained free of significant violence. Kosovo Serbs from the region of Lipljan in MNB(Centre) and Vitina in MNB(East) said they would no longer accept threats or harassment without reacting.

3. KFOR troops continued to uncover and confiscate caches of weapons, ammunition and explosives during house searches and at traffic control checkpoints. Other incidents across the province involved arson attacks on outbuildings or mostly uninhabited houses, explosions, grenade attacks, isolated shootings, armed robberies, arrests for illegal possession of arms and drugs, and curfew violations. The most serious incidents included the following. On 22 March in MNB(North) a railway bridge 10 kilometres north of Mitrovica was partially destroyed in an explosion, and in another incident mines were found close to a road traffic bridge and defused in time. On 13 April a cordon and search operation in Mitrovica in MNB(North) resulted in the arrest of seven individuals after the confiscation of 10 rifles, 2 pistols, 19 magazines, 11 hand grenades and 4 bayonets.

4. On 19 April, KFOR began destroying confiscated weapons. This new programme does not affect weapons turned in by the KLA as part of their undertaking.

5. During the period, KFOR took a number of steps to increase control over the internal boundary of the province, particularly in order to prevent arms and potential insurgents crossing from Kosovo into southern Serbia. On 14 April a large amount of weapons and explosives were seized from a truck believed to be travelling from Pristina in the direction of the Presevo Valley. Two Kosovo Albanians were detained in this incident.

6. Some acts of violence were committed against KFOR over the reporting period. On three occasions KFOR was fired at — twice in MNB(Central) and once in MNB(East). In two other incidents, both in MNB(Central), KFOR used non-lethal devices and weapons to control situations involving angry crowds — a Kosovo Serb was shot in the leg during one incident.

Illegal border activity

7. KFOR troops continued to provide appropriate control of Kosovo's internal boundaries and external borders, and recognized crossing points. KFOR has tightened control of the provincial borders and boundaries to prevent extremists based in Kosovo from operating elsewhere. All but two of the recognized crossing points within each MNB into the ground safety zone have been closed. Although these measures generally appear to have been effective, KFOR noted a number of incidents relating to illegal border crossings. In particular, at the border crossing point of Morina South, there were at least 15 incidents involving about 34 persons who were prevented from illegally crossing the border after warning shots were fired. At the same time, there were eight incidents of successful entry into either Kosovo or Albania, involving about 26 persons. KFOR detained about 50 persons at the border crossing points of Morina South, Krusevo, Dragas, Globocica and Vrbnica in around 20 incidents, and expelled five persons to Albania after identity checks and confiscation of ammunition.

8. Reporting indicates that groups of armed men continue to prepare to conduct paramilitary activities in and near Dobrosin in the ground safety zone. Finally, KFOR destroyed two separate quantities of explosives found near the border crossing point of Prusit,

confiscated munitions from an abandoned vehicle, and observed one suspected smuggling incident.

Security Council resolution 1160 (1998) — arms embargo

9. Although KFOR operations continue to result in weapons seizures, no violations of resolution 1160 (1998) have been reported.

Cooperation and compliance by the parties

10. The Kosovo Protection Corps continued to work closely with KFOR and the police component of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). There have been four cases of major non-compliance reported during this period. The individuals involved have been suspended for one month pending police investigations, bringing the number of Kosovo Protection Corps personnel suspended to nine.

11. UNMIK and KFOR continued to ensure adherence of the Kosovo Protection Corps to its civilian mandate. Phase 2 of the establishment of the Corps continues to make progress. The Corp leadership has identified 3,052 members to be retained for full-time service. Another opportunity will be provided in May to allow about 400 members who are entitled to register to do so. Registration would then cease for the rest of the year. Recruitment to fill minority positions continues to be difficult, with the total number of minorities enrolled in the Kosovo Protection Corps remaining at around 60 persons.

12. With regard to Kosovo Protection Corps work projects, KFOR field visits noted approximately 300 Corps members involved in projects, with an estimated additional 1,000 members due to become involved during the month of May. UNMIK has been encouraging local administrators to identify projects and will be seeking sponsors.

13. The Army (VJ) and security forces of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia were generally compliant with the terms of the military technical agreement and cooperative in their dealings with KFOR. VJ units continued to conduct seasonal training in southern Serbia, near the ground safety zone.

Cooperation with international organizations

14. KFOR continued to provide humanitarian assistance to international organizations and non-governmental organizations throughout Kosovo on a daily basis as well as on request, with a focus on the distribution of stoves, firewood, fuel, water, shelter kits and construction materials. KFOR troops also supported the food distribution efforts of international organizations, and protected and escorted refugees and internally displaced persons. KFOR supported non-governmental organizations in providing humanitarian assistance to remote and isolated minorities, and in assisting in a spring/summer housing and school reconstruction programme.

15. As at 22 April, the UNMIK police force numbered 3,132, including 207 border police and 374 in special police units. The first special (riot) police company which arrived during the last reporting period has been operational in Mitrovica since 10 April.

16. KFOR continued to support UNMIK at all levels of the civil administration. Of note was the agreement by the Gracanica-based Serb National Council to send a representative as an observer to the Interim Administrative Council. The major Kosovo political parties are working together in the Kosovo-UNMIK Joint Interim Administrative Structure. Of the 20 administrative departments in the planned Structure, only seven were operational: Local Administration, Health and Social Welfare, Education and Science, Public Services, Justice, Central Fiscal Authority, and Reconstruction.

17. At the provincial level, the Kosovo Transitional Council continued to meet regularly to carry out its duties, and invited representatives of civil society, political parties, religious groups and national communities to participate. The Serb National Council, excluding the Serb National Council of Mitrovica, has agreed that four representatives will participate in the Kosovo Transitional Council as observers for an initial period of three months. The Kosovo Transitional Council continued to underline its commitment to work towards a united Kosovo where all national communities were able to stay and lead a normal and peaceful life.

18. At the district level, KFOR continued to work closely with the appointed civil administrators, and has provided personnel as liaison with the staffs of UNMIK civil administration officers in each district. Local

governments have been established in almost all of the 30 municipalities.

Return of refugees and displaced persons

19. From July 1999 to 20 April 2000 the refugee repatriation programme organized by the International Office of Migration and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) assisted 139,000 voluntary returns, primarily from third countries. The current return rate is estimated at 6,000 refugees per month, with about 150,000 refugees expected to return to Kosovo this year.

20. It is estimated that there are 204,000 internally displaced persons in Serbia and over 30,000 in Montenegro. KFOR, UNMIK, UNHCR and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe continued to work closely together to improve conditions for the Serb minorities in Orahovac, Velika Hoca and Djakovica.

Outlook

21. Although tension is expected to remain high in some parts of Kosovo, KFOR continues to work in close coordination with UNMIK to promote and maintain security and stability in the province.